

Message Text

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14

ACTION EA-14

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SECDEF

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 3683

SECDEF FOR DIA

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJECT: FORECAST OF POSSIBLE CANCELLATION TOKYO
METROPOLITAN SECURITY REGULATIONS

REF: USDAO TOKYO JAPAN 140756 Z MAR 73, CITE
76 MAR 73

1. REFTTEL REPORTS OPINION OF QTE HIGH LEVEL UNQTE SOURCE
THAT FOLLOWING PROBABLE VICTORY OF LEFTIST COALITION IN
TOKYO METROPOLITAN ASSEMBLY ELECTION SCHEDULED FOR JULY
OF THIS YEAR GOVERNOR MINOBE WOULD IMMEDIATELY CANCEL
SECURITY REGULATIONS FOR TOKYO AND THAT THIS WOULD IMMEDIATELY
RESULT IN UNBRIDLED AND DISASTROUS LARGE- SCALE PUBLIC
DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST LDP, US BASES IN JAPAN AND MUTUAL
SECURITY TREATY. FOLLOWING IS EMBASSY COMMENT ON CONTENT
OF THIS REPORT.

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2. EMBASSY AWARE THAT SUCH VIEWS ARE BEING PROPAGATED BY SOME LDP ELEMENTS AS PART OF SCARE CAMPAIGN TO INFLUENCE CONSERVATIVE VOTERS, AND BELIEVES THAT THEY SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN AT FACE VALUE. IN EMBASSY VIEW CONJECTURE REPORTED REFTTEL GIVES HIGHLY EXAGGERATED AND MISLEADING PICTURE OF PROBABLY CONSEQUENCES OF LDP DEFEAT IN UPCOMING ELECTION IGNORING MANY RESTRAINING FACTORS WHICH WOULD OPERATE TO CURB LEFTIST EXTREMISM. IT IS DOUBTFUL, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT GOVERNOR MINOBE AND HIS LEFTIST SUPPORTERS WHO HAVE A STAKE IN MAINTAINING THEIR MODERATE IMAGE WOULD BE WILLING TO RISK ALIENATING THEIR PUBLIC SUPPORT BY ENCOURAGING RADICAL TACTICS AT THIS TIME. IT IS ALSO QUESTIONABLE WHETHER LARGE- SCALE PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS WOULD NECESSARILY RESULT FROM MERELY CHANGING SECURITY REGULATIONS, WHICH IN ANY EVENT ARE PREMISED ON CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AND IMPOSE ONLY MINIMAL RESTRICTIONS ON DEMONSTRATIONS. IT IS ALSO VIRTUALLY CERTAIN THAT MAXIMUM LEFTIST GAINS IN ASSEMBLY ELECTION METROPOLITAN ASSEMBLY WOULD NOT MEAN COMPLETE LEFTIST COMINATION OF ASSEMBLY AND ELIMINATION OF ALL CONSERVATIVE STRENGTH AND CAPACITY TO RESIST LEFTIST EXCESSES.

3. ALTHOUGH TOKYO METROPOLITEAN GOVERNOR AND ASSEMBLY HAVE EXTENSIVE POWERS OVER POLICE AND PUBLIC SECURITY MATTERS, SUCH POWERS ARE NOT ABSOLUTE. GOVERNOR'S PUBLIC SECURITY AUTHORITY IS ESSENTIALLY LIMITED TO POWER TO APPOINT MEMBERS OF METROPOLITAN PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION WHICH IS CHARGED WITH DECIDING PUBLIC SECURITY POLICY AND EXERCISING JURISDICTION OVER TOKYO METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT (TMPD). SUPERINTENDENT- GENERAL OF TMPD IS, HOWEVER, APPOINTED BY NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION WITH CONSENT OF METROPOLITAN PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION AND APPROVAL OF PRIME MINISTER. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSIONERS ARE APPOINTED FOR THREE- YEAR TERMS AND ARE SUPPOSED TO BE NON- PARTISAN REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERESTS OF WHOLE COMMUNITY. TOKYO METROPOLITAN ASSEMBLY HAS POWER TO APPROVE GOVERNOR'S APPOINTMENTS TO METROPOLITAN PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION AND EXERCISES BUDGETARY CONTROLS OVER TMPD OPERATIONS. HOWEVER, THESE POWERS SEEM UNLIKELY TO LEAD IN SHORT RUN AND IN ABSENCE OVERWHELMINGLY FAVORABLE PUBLIC SENTIMENT TO RADICAL WEAKENING OF POLICE FUNCTIONS IN METROPOLIS.

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